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Northwestern Shoshone plan to build cultural interpretive center at Bear River Massacre site

By Darcy Ritchie
MANAGING EDITOR

At 7 a.m. on Nov. 11, Nora Sackett led her 10-person crew through their daily "stretch and safety" in a muddy field near Preston, Idaho.

Everyone took a turn leading the group in a stretch, shared a safety tip for the day and then chose which field tool they'd want in a zombie apocalypse.

After stretching, the crew set up their chainsaws and got to work cutting down trees.

Sackett is a field boss from the Utah Conservation Corps, or UCC, a program in Utah State University's Center for Community Engagement.

Since Oct. 26, the UCC has been working to restore the habitat at the Bear River Massacre site to its pre-agricultural condition.

The crew camps out on the land and works from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. cutting down trees and treating the stumps with herbicide, so they won't grow back.

The crew has mainly been working to remove Russian olive trees, which were brought to the land to help with stream bank erosion. But, according to Jake Oakden, the northern technical coordinator for the UCC, these trees outcompeted the natural plant species and caused a lot of erosion problems.

"The hope is that by removing a lot of the Russian olive that they're going to be able to work on, kind of, bringing the stream back to a more natural state," Oakden said.

PHOTO BY Bailey Rigby

Courtney Abate and Anna Smoloen work together to cut down Russion olive trees at the Bear River Massacre site on Nov. 11.

The crew works in eight-day hitches and will finish their second and final hitch on Nov. 16.

The habitat restoration is just one part of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation's plan to build a cultural interpretive center where the Bear River Massacre took place more than 150 years ago.

The Bear River Massacre, also known as the Massacre at Boa Ogoi, is the largest mass killing of Native Americans in U.S. history. An estimated 400 Shoshone were killed by the United States Army California Volunteers on Jan. 29, 1863.

In 2018, the tribe purchased the land where the massacre took place and has been working on plans to build the center since.

Brad Parry, the vice chairman and program manager of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, said the tribe hired engineers from Hansen, Allen & Luce Inc. and biologists from Bio-West Inc. to put together a plan for habitat restoration, along with help from USU's Climate Adaptation Science program.

"As a tribe, we felt that there was no point in having a cultural center if we didn't culturally return the land back to what it may have been like when we were last there in the 1860s," Parry said.

Sackett said it's been cool to work on a project with so much significance.

"On the first day there was a ceremony, and they blessed us," she said. "The tribe blessed us and blessed the site, so that was super cool to have this experience where we feel actually connected to the work we're doing."

Plans for the outdoor portion of the center include onsite nurseries and walking trails through the massacre site.

"Along the way we'll be able to identify trees and plants and different things that the tribe uses medicinally or for food or culturally," Parry said, "and we want people to be able to walk through there and see that this is a living nursery."

Parry said they are anticipating the habitat restoration will take three to four years, but the tribe plans to break ground on the interpretive center next summer.

Darren Parry, a council member of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation — and first cousin to Brad Parry — said that the inside will feature exhibits that change with the seasons to reflect the Shoshone's changing lifestyle.

"We're not going to charge to have anybody go, so, you know, it's not a money thing," Darren said, "but I just wanted people to be able to go back often and hear the story of the plants and see what was important to the Shoshones at certain times of the year."

Students in professor Holly Murdock's commercial interior design studio class are working together with the tribe to design the floor plan of the interpretive center.

Because storytelling is so important to the Shoshone, Murdock challenged her students to design the building in a way that tells a story.

Ashtyn Mendenhaal, a junior in the interior design program, said she designed her floor plan to pull visitors in like a story would.

"It's really emotional, I think, when you read a story and you get tied down to that," Mendenhaal said, "and I think that the cultural center in general should be an emotional attachment that people feel as they're walking through the space."

The interpretive center will sit on a bluff overlooking the massacre site, with a bird's eye view of where the bodies of the Shoshone lay beneath the surface. Even though the center will teach guests about the massacre, it's not meant to be a place of sadness.

"They ultimately want it to be a place of joy and unity," Murdock said. "They want everyone, regardless of who they are or where they're from, to come there and feel welcome."

It's also meant to be a place of learning, where visitors can learn from the tragic mistakes of the past.

As a child, Darren remembers his grandmother Mae Timbimboo Parry telling him, "No one has ever wanted to hear our story before. One day you will have to make them listen."

Though his grandmother passed away years ago, Darren has felt a responsibility to make sure the Shoshone story is told, so visitors can learn from it.

"Those voices — those people that were massacred that day — their voices cry to me from the dust," he said. "They need their story told."

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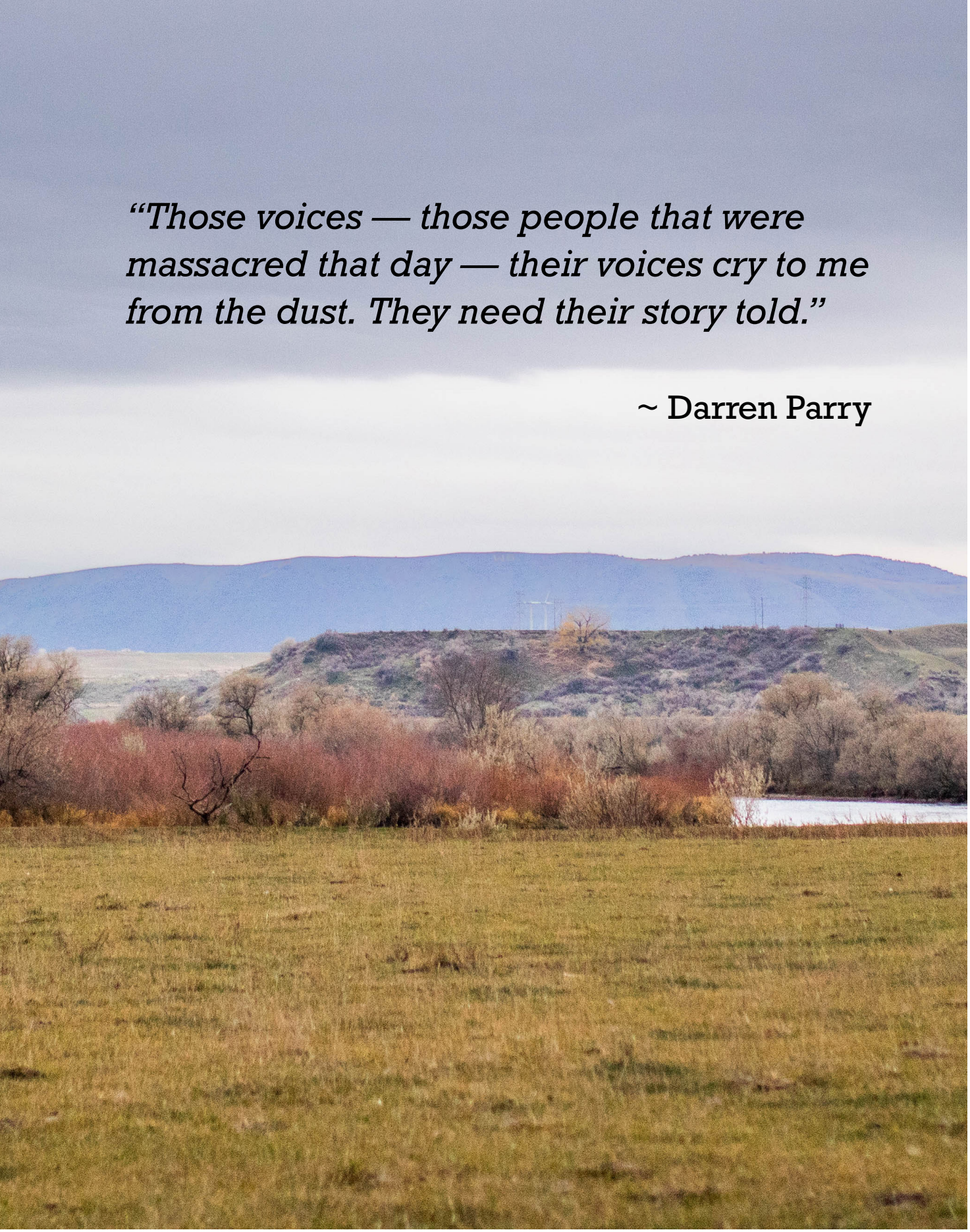

PHOTO BY **Bailey Rigby**

The cultural interpretive center will be built on a bluff overlooking the massacre site.

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Students learn about the history and impact of Native American boarding schools.

PHOTO BY Jared Craig

Artwork created at Intermountain Indian School to be displayed at USU

By Clarissa Casper
LIFESTYLES STAFF WRITER

As the Indigenous program coordinator at the Utah State University Inclusion Center, Alina Begay gets to live and advocate for her culture every day.

Begay said she loves to spread awareness about Native American History, especially that of the Native American boarding schools. The topic hits very close to home for Begay, as both of her grandparents worked at Intermountain Indian School in Brigham City.

"A lot of people don't know about what really happened to the children in those boarding schools," Begay said, "along with the assimilation and the taking away of our culture."

On Nov. 11, an event hosted by the Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, the Inclusion Center and PBS Utah delved into the topics surrounding Native American boarding schools. Attendants of the event listened to the book "Cheyanne Again" by Eve Bunting, looked at murals from the now closed Intermountain Indian School, and watched clips from the PBS Utah documentary "Unspoken."

The content presented at this event shed light into the lives of Indigenous people who were forced to give up their culture due to assimilation.

A section from the documentary said, "Children were separated from siblings. Hair was cut. Uniforms were distributed. No traditional dress was allowed. The students marched to class in the mornings and had trades training in the afternoons. Students were forced to learn and speak English. Their native languages were to be unspoken."

At the former Intermountain Indian School in Brigham City, many works of art were created by various students including murals, poetry and other forms of artwork.

Once the school was demolished, much of the artwork was destroyed, but there were a few pieces that remained. The chair of the USU Public Art Committee, Katie Lee-Koven, put together a committee to determine what needed to happen to these murals.

"We want to bring them back to the public so that we can share those objects and be a part of the telling of the history of Intermountain," Lee-Koven said.

The murals are currently a part of a travelling art exhibit — their next destination being the Merril-Cazier Library at the USU Logan campus. The murals will be on campus near the beginning of spring semester.

"I think art is one of the most amazing ways to share history and stories," Lee-Koven said. "And these murals are some of the few physical material objects that still exist from this school."

The final destination for these pieces of art will be USU Brigham City where they will be conserved and protected, according to Lee-Koven.

An attendee of the event, Karen Begaii-Wilson, was born and raised inside the walls of Intermountain. Not only did she grow up surrounded by these pieces of art, she watched much of the art be created. She was delighted when she found out the artwork was going to be returned to its original town — Brigham City.

"I really connect to the artwork because it depicts my home," Begaii-Wilson said. "When those artists drew pictures of the reservation, I consider it home because that is where my parents and my grandparents are from."

Begaii-Wilson is filled with gratitude that this art is now protected as it represents her history.

"I'm really looking forward to the day when they finally get everything situated and have them all set up in Brigham City," Begaii-Wilson said.

One of the biggest themes of this event was to bring awareness to topics surrounding the history of Indigenous people, as many of the hardships they experienced in the past are still present today.

James Swensen, an associate professor of art and history at BYU, as well as one of the people who has helped gather the artwork and poetry, said this art displays who these people were in an amazing way.

"The art really shows them as well-rounded human beings," Swensen said. "It represents more than just a narrative of victimhood — which is an appropriate reaction to boarding schools — but as with every human experience, there is more to it."

Swensen said for USU students to be supportive of and educated on these topics, they should have humility and acknowledge the history, learn from it and simply listen to the stories and struggles of those who are unlike you, according to Swensen.

Clarissa Casper is a sophomore studying journalism and aquatic science at Utah State University. Outside of writing for the Statesman, she loves to hike, write poetry and watch whales.

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GUEST COLUMN

Assimilation or elimination: a native identity

Throughout my whole college experience, when people find out I'm Native American, I get one of two responses: "That means you get college for free right?" or "That's awesome I'm one-sixteenth Navajo (or insert a different tribe name)". Many people do not understand the racist and harmful undertones that come with these questions. To clarify, I do not feel as though people asking these questions have bad intentions. Quite the opposite, I believe people want to connect to others and that is a way for people to connect: to find common ground and relate to the person they are having a conversation with. But it is important to know the origins of these questions.

The first question to ask yourself is why do we care about how much Native blood runs in our veins? The first use of a blood quantum law can be traced to the colonies of the United States. Virginia was the first colony to instate a law defining Native Americans as full-blooded or half-blooded. It was primarily used to exclude Native Americans from being citizens and denying them rights to do things that white people could do. Today the United States government, specifically the Department of the Interior, issues certificates verifying that people are Native American. This can be legally used as an ID card and usually requires a person to have 25% Native blood (depending on the tribe). The issue with this form of identification is Native people will eventually breed themselves out of identity. This lets the federal government not keep treaties with Native nations and is a harmful way of thinking about identity. Think about asking a Black person how Black they are, then saying something like "Well, I'm one- sixteenth Black". It sounds out of place and rude, but blood quantum is so instilled in the idea of Native America that it is a common to ask, "How Native are you?". And some people think this is a good form of identity measurement because of all the "free things" given to Native people through the United States government.

People have told me people would take advantage of being Native American without blood quantum's. A big stereotype of Native Americans is they are lazy and get everything for free. I had multiple instances in my life where people say Native Americans just feed off the government and they take advantage of the lands "given" to them. For anyone who has lived on or even visited, a reservation will quickly see there wisn't much luxury. Most of the land Native Americans were forced to live on was unusable for crops, lacked wildlife, and caused Native people to rely on the United States government. Many people bring up the point that you can leave the reservation, but that could mean leaving your family, traditions, and acceptance from your tribe. I believe the reason the U.S. government did this is to assimilate Native America. Aside from the literal interpretation that the U.S. government is tossing it's problems to the side, the assimilation theory is only reinforced when you look at the Lost Generation. The Lost Generation is the Native

PHOTO BY Bailey Rigby

children forced to go to boarding schools, much like those in Canada where the bodies of Native children are being found. A rift grew between those forced to go to boarding school and the other members of the tribe. Those children were not accepted by the members of the tribe because they associated with white people and the white people didn't view the Native children with the same value as their white counterparts. In fact, you could say those who were in charge of the Native children didn't view them as humans. My grandma is a part of this generation and I have not heard my grandma talk about her experiences because of how horrendously they treated her. The United States and Canada aren't the only governments that did this though. The Australian government refer to this as the Stolen Generation. None of the governments were subtle about the purpose of this either. It was to force these children to be involved with white culture. The problem is they took these children away from their family and caused them to not have a place in either the Native community or the society of the government that is supposed to be looking after them. The government didn't give any resources to work through the immense trauma caused by the abuse. When people say to me "you're so lucky you get school for free!" (which I don't), what they fail to recognize is the immense trauma that generations of Native people went through and still go through to get those "handouts".

When finding my own Native identity there are two moments that always stick out to me in my mind. The first one was when I was working as a photographer for a Native American museum. The museum would frequently have children come on field trips to view its artifacts. The museum would always allow the kids to ask questions. One frequent question was: "Are there any Native Americans still alive today?" The majority of the staff at the museum are Native American and enthusiastically answer, "You are

talking to some right now." While it is fun that you can say you are talking to one, it can still hurt when they don't believe you. The other experience was when I was much younger. I personally didn't grow up on a reservation, I grew up in Kaysville. When Thanksgiving comes around, the elementary school I went to usually held a play representing the first Thanksgiving. At the time I was assigned to be a pilgrim and I remember my parent getting upset about it. I always knew I am Native American, but for some reason the idea of being a pilgrim didn't bother me. Everyone else was acting like something/someone they are not. I could be white for an evening. Now, looking back, I can see how a teacher who didn't know my identity putting me in the role of the people who slaughtered Native Americans would be harmful. Looking at the situation as a whole, it is harmful to teach Native people are only part of ancient America. It would be beneficial to show children what Native America looks like today. Part of that is exposing the truth about what the United States government did to Native people after that "peaceful" Thanksgiving Day.

Throughout my whole life I have had to grapple with the idea of being a Native American. The question of what makes me "Native enough" isn't an easy question to escape when the first response people have to your identity is "how Native are you?" or "do you get handouts?" But it helped me to refine what makes someone Native: finding culture, keeping practices, and being willing to embrace traditions passed from my parents/grandparents. The amount of blood you have in your body may be the sociolegal definition of what a Native American is, but it doesn't begin to define what it truly means to be Native American. Most Natives I meet are very hard working, willing to do anything for their families, and care deeply about the earth. When making connections with Native people it could be good to think about what you are asking. Perhaps asking a Native person "what is your tribe?" and then learning more about their tribe could be a more effective way to go about making a connection. Learning about what it is like growing up on a reservation, or learning from the Native community what it means to be Native American to them. Being part-Native yourself (no matter how small) can be a big deal. You can be a positive change to the community when you learn about problems and find out ways to help resolve them. I don't want to take away from the sincerity of the connection, but have people think about how you are connecting.

Nathaniel Gillis is part of the Arikara Tribe from North Dakota. He grew up in Kaysville, Utah and currently is studying Broadcast Journalism here at USU.

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Christmas before Thanksgiving, again?

By Jared Adams
NEWS STAFF WRITER

PHOTO BY Paige Johnson

A Christmas tree and decor set up in front of the USU Campus Store.

Stores across the country sparked an annual debate by setting up holiday displays at the start of November.

Many businesses, including large retailers Walmart and Target, along with smaller local stores in Logan, have had lights, trees and other holiday decorations and merchandise available since early September.

The Utah State University Campus Store is one of these retailers, having started setting up their holiday display on Nov. 1 this year.

Jason Brown, the director of the USU Campus Store, said the main reason for the decorations is they make people happy, but also that the end of the semester plays a big role.

Not only is the end of the semester busy for the store because most of their business during finals week comes from textbooks and exam supplies, but students also leave campus for Christmas break. If they waited to set up decorations, students wouldn't be able to enjoy them for long.

Brown said they also have sales and events throughout the Christmas season, and they want to be prepared by already having set the mood.

"We do a lot of the fun holiday stuff earlier in December," Brown said. "But by about the second week of the month, we roll into the academic side of it, then everyone leaves campus."

Nicole Morgenegg, the marketing manager, said there are multiple other reasons for the early decorations.

"Christmas is the next big holiday after Halloween," Morgenegg said. "There's not really Thanksgiving music and decorations."

Morgenegg also mentioned because the store is located in the Taggart Student Center, where many students walk through every day, it's important for them to feel the spirit of the holiday season.

Becca Crummitt, a customer service supervisor, said the decorations bring a lot of joy to not only students but staff too.

"It's been really fun for the cashiers because we get to do all the decorating," Crummitt said. "We got to decorate the Christmas trees. I loved putting the topper on even though I'm the shortest one."

In a screenshot from an interview, the owner of Anderson's Seed and Garden, Mark Anderson, talks about the store's Christmas display.

Crummitt said while some students have had a negative attitude towards the decorations, they aren't bothered.

"Christmas is whenever your heart tells you it is," she said. "I feel like you should be able to put up decorations at any point in time, even though you may have to hide them for a while."

Alongside the decor, the store is also offering a Cyber Monday sale the weekend after Thanksgiving and is expecting to offer seasonal merchandise and other promotional items.

USU's on-campus store isn't the only local retailer preparing for the holidays. Anderson's Seed and Garden, located at 69 W. Center St., is also prepared for the season and has been for months.

Anderson's Seed and Garden opened in Logan in 1942, and their holiday display started small in the 1960s.

Mark Anderson, a third-generation owner and president of the store, took over the store in 1999. He said the displays started with about six trees but has continued to grow every year since he took over.

As of Nov. 5, the store had dozens of decorated trees on display, as well as other decorations for sale spread throughout the store.

Anderson is proud of the store's extensive displays and said it takes almost a year to prepare.

"We order almost all of this stuff almost a year in advance," Anderson said. "We get started decorating in September, as the Utah State starts up. It's the perfect transition time for us to start weeding out the gardening stuff and start bringing all the holiday decor in."

Anderson also thinks that merchandising earlier in the year is effective for business purposes, even when some people claim to be against it.

"More people are purchasing earlier, especially this year," he said. "Customers will come in to see the Christmas merchandise when it's the first week of September and ask why we are starting so early. They will look at it, and sometimes even buy something before they leave."

And according to the National Retail Federation, or NRF, Anderson is correct in his observation. More than 50% of consumers began holiday shopping before Thanksgiving in 2019. This number is predicted to increase this year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Even students can get on board with the idea of an early Christmas. Shelby Green, a freshman at USU, doesn't see any problems with holiday decorations in November.

"For me personally, Christmas decorations and the season bring me a lot of joy," Green said.

This trend, however, doesn't seem to be consistent across all of Cache Valley.

Mark Fjeldsted, who owns The Sportsman, said their store does decorate for the holiday season later in the month of November and they don't go all out.

"We don't do it before Halloween," Fjeldsted said. "We slowly bring it out as time allows, and hopefully it gets done before Thanksgiving."

However, USU sophomore Ella Rose Leonelli said early Christmas decorations disappoint her.

"I am a strong believer that Christmas decorations should not go up before December," Leonelli said. "There is no need for Christmas decorations to go up any earlier."

Read the rest of this story at ususstatesman.com.

Jared Adams is a sophomore at USU studying communications. Outside of news writing, Jared enjoys coffee, elephants, rainy days and Taylor Swift.

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Mayor Holly Daines, city council members reelected

By Maggie Erekson
NEWS STAFF WRITER

Nov. 2, local elections were held around the state of Utah, including Logan.

Two Logan city council chairs, as well as the mayoral seat were up for election. This election happens every four years.

The incumbent Mayor Holly Daines was reelected, along with incumbents Amy Anderson and Ernesto Lopez for city council.

"I am excited to finish a lot of great projects that we have started from the first term," Daines said. "In government it takes a while for an idea — with the public hearing process — to get it budgeted — to really move forward. I'm looking forward to having four more years to finish those projects."

According to Daines, these projects include the revitalization of Center Street, drawing new businesses to the downtown area, a new library building, more trails, neighborhood councils to provide community feedback and a new park in the middle of downtown, with a stage, splashpad and ice rink.

Anderson and Lopez have also been instrumental in helping these projects come to fruition, and Daines is pleased to continue working with them, even going so far as to endorse their campaigns for reelection.

"I have worked with Amy for four years now and Ernesto for a little over a year since he was appointed. They have been very supportive of what I have tried to do," Daines said. "So, because I knew they were supportive, I'd like to see them continue because we have a common vision, common goals and we work well together."

"Based on the responses of the city council members, I'm really optimistic about the changes happening in Logan," said Abby McLinn, a freshman at USU.

Outside of being on city council, Anderson is the director of outreach for the Sunshine Terrace Foundation. She and her family have lived in Logan for 17 years and she hopes to be able to help Logan retain its small-town community as it continues to grow.

"I think it's such a unique community to have that small-town feel but still have access to some of those bigger city things and the benefits of the university, without maybe all of the accompanying problems," Anderson said. "But as we grow, we are starting to have some of those problems with traffic and housing, so I'd like to be a part of the group that helps to identify what those solutions are."

Anderson also believes her background in mediation is an asset to the council.

She said it can be hard for opposing sides to recognize the value in the way that the city government wants to move forward, although she believes her talents can help facilitate that and find common ground to find a solution.

Lopez is one of the newest members of the council,

PHOTO BY Bailey Rigby
Logan city Mayor Holly Daines.

appointed in October 2020 to finish the term of former council member Jess Bradfield. He currently works as an instructional course designer of the extension service at USU. He became the first Hispanic immigrant to serve as a city council member in Logan when first elected, and continues to represent that role.

Read the rest of this story at ususstatesman.com.

The long term effects of

By Emily White
LIFESTYLES CONTENT MANAGER

Anna Fabiszak knew exactly what she wanted to do. Chemistry had been her favorite class in high school. She'd done well in it, too. She was excited by the ways in which chemicals conspire to create life. And whenever she would picture her future self, it was in a lab coat and goggles.

So when she arrived at Utah State University in 2009, chemistry was the major she wanted to pursue.

By 2010, though, she was majoring in nutrition science. Her love for chemistry had been relegated to a minor.

She's not alone. Women make up a majority of students at Utah State — but a minority of those earning science, technology, engineering and mathematics degrees. Female professors and students in STEM say it wouldn't be that way if women were allowed to have the same unearned confidence that so many men have.

Sexism in STEM programs isn't as prevalent as it used to be. "It seems like the men are very accepting and anxious to work with the women," explained Vicki Allan, a computer science professor at USU.

So why aren't more women majoring in STEM programs?

"What happens is if a guy is getting a C, they just go, 'I don't care, I love my major and I'm staying in it.' If a woman is getting a C, they're going, 'Oh, everyone told me I couldn't do this, I guess I can't,'" Allan said.

According to Allan women often self-select so only the ones who get high grades stay in the program. She believes that women are self-selecting for failure — likely because of what they've heard about their chances for success.

That's what happened to Fabiszak.

"I'm not the best at math," Fabiszak said. "Math was always my weakest subject."

"Weak" for Fabiszak meant Bs, not As — and a challenging time passing a test in an introductory college math class that she took in high school.

Math, of course, is an important part of chemistry. And that alone was enough to push Fabiszak into another major.

But as Fabiszak neared the end of her nutrition degree she realized she had made a mistake.

"I remember being at that point in my degree where I was like, 'I don't want to be a nutritionist,'" Fabiszak said.

In the fall of 2012, she started taking organic chemistry. "It was always kind of in the back of my mind," Fabiszak said.

It was like a switch flipped in her brain — she had to switch majors.

Fabiszak immediately scheduled an appointment with her adviser — but was discouraged from making the change, which might have pushed back her graduation date.

According to a study from the Girl Scout Research Institute, 74% of girls in middle school say they are interested in studying STEM subjects.

How many stay in those fields through college? Less than 20%, according to the study.

In 2014, Fabiszak graduated USU with a nutrition science degree and a minor in chemistry. She never used her major.

Unlike Fabiszak, Anastasiia Tkachenko started in STEM and is finishing in STEM. Tkachenko is a Ph.D. student from Russia studying computer science at USU.

Early on in her education, Tkachenko was surrounded by women. In high school, she attended classes with 11 girls and one boy. She learned algebra, biology, chemistry and physics surrounded by female peers. Most of Tkachenko's teachers were women, and she recalls that they always supported her choice to go into technology-oriented programs.

After ninth grade, students individually choose to either stay in school or continue in a trade school, where they

sexism on women in STEM

are educated and work in a career sooner. Even though most men in Russia choose to go to a trade school, Tkachenko noticed a steep drop off of women studying with her as she furthered her education.

Tkachenko said that after her undergrad program, she had fewer female friends.

"Most of my classmates just decided to leave education," she said. As her friends began dropping off, so did Tkachenko's female professors.

People attribute the gradual decline of women in STEM fields to different things, but Utah State chemistry professor Kimberly Hageman has a hypothesis.

In her own life, Hageman found that female support and representation got her into chemistry. Because her father was a working chemist, Hageman found herself in chemistry labs at a young age.

Watching women in white lab coats performing experiments and working in chemistry labs gave Hageman the confidence to study chemistry in higher education.

"I didn't necessarily think I could be a professor until I saw that there are women professors," Hageman said.

As she watched her female classmates drop out of school, Tkachenko noticed a trend that supports Hageman's hypothesis.

"It seems that they kind of choose between education and family," she explained.

Vicki Allan is one of the only female computer science professors Tkachenko has. Like Tkachenko, Allan was encouraged to pursue STEM programs.

"My father was actually head of the department at USU in computer science," Allan said. "He talked my husband into computer science." Meanwhile, Allan received undergraduate and graduate degrees in mathematics. When it came time to get a job, Allan found herself in a pickle.

"If you were a math teacher, they wanted you to coach football, basketball or track," Allan said. "The positions were linked."

There were jobs in computer science, but at first Allan didn't feel confident that was the right path for her — after all, she only had a minor in that subject, but she ultimately decided to give it a try.

As she taught, she began to realize something.

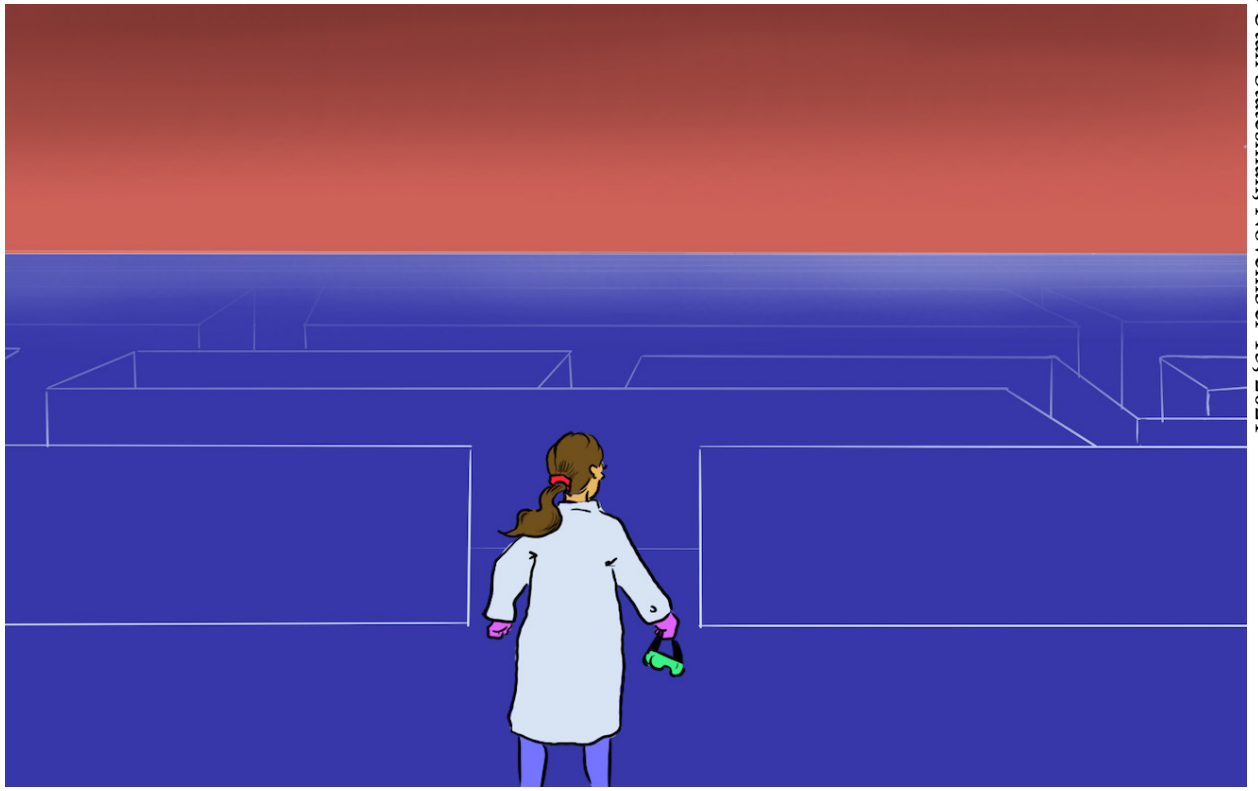
"I'm really good and love computer science," Allan said.

At Utah State, Allan says only 12.8% of students in the undergraduate computer science program are women — less than the national average. On top of that, in terms of percentage, Allan said the computer science program has more women leaving the field than men.

"The stereotypes against women in tech start young and are reinforced by parents and peer groups," Allan said. If young women are not encouraged to pursue tech, they are less likely to do so as they get older.

Freshman year is a formative one. Wide-eyed students are often in a new town, sharing tiny apartments with people they've never met and going to classes taught by experts in the field. At parties, new students find themselves meeting hundreds of new faces with one question: What is your major?

"You kind of gauge the reaction," Allan explained. A woman majoring in elementary education is more likely to be encouraged than the woman majoring in STEM, not because of difficulty levels, but because of stereotypes. Those reactions, Allan says, affect women more than we might think.



GRAPHIC BY **Keith Wilson**

Allan wants the stereotypes, statistics and self-selection to change. That change might be slow, but it's happening.

Over the summers, USU helps run an App Camp for girls and boys in middle school. In the camp, students learn how to develop apps. This year, Allan had an important question that still needs answering.

"If we get females in an all-female class, do they do better?" Allan asked.

To find out, App Camp leaders would need to have enough girls to create an all-female session and a combined male and female session. But in what was perhaps a sign that there is still a lot of work to be done, the female sessions didn't fill up all summer.

That didn't prevent the organizers from drawing some important conclusions.

"Basically, what we learned is that young women do not need an all-female space to thrive," Allan said. "But, what is important is the support of parents in pursuing a non-traditional interest."

Still, women need to feel supported by their peers and according to Tkachenko, clubs are the way to do that.

"Vicki Allan sent me an invitation to join the Association for Computing Machinery for women," Tkachenko said. "It was really amazing, just because I didn't know that actually, computer science provides such a club."

The club is an organization at USU that promotes computer machinery for women.

Clubs like this help women find support in their STEM majors. Being a part of it is encouraging to Tkachenko.

Fabiszak found her courage and came back to USU in the spring of 2020. She is now studying chemistry.

"We still need more women to feel like they can go into STEM," Fabiszak said. "A lot of us are gonna open up doors for younger women."

Last summer, Fabiszak worked in the Hageman lab conducting field studies and lab experiments. She now works as a research technician in the biology department, working in a lab coat with goggles.

Emily White is a senior studying English and print journalism. She is currently the Lifetyles content manager.

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Best-selling author empowers imagination during book tour

By Emily White and Malorie Ellefson

Imagination may start as a creative outlet, but it grows into empathy and phenomenal potential — at least, that's what New York Times Best Seller Brandon Mull said.

On Oct. 26, 2021, Mull released the fifth and final installment of his "Dragonwatch" series. "Dragonwatch" is an add-on to Mull's best-selling series, "Fablehaven." According to Mull, "Dragonwatch" is the second half of the "Fablehaven" protagonists' story.

"Dragonwatch: Return of the Dragonslayers" brings this beloved series to a gripping finale. According to Mull, this will be the last book where Seth and Kendra, the Fablehaven protagonists, are showcased.

"I want the books to generally put more light than darkness out into the world," Mull said. In his Fablehaven and Dragonwatch books, Mull's characters reflect that desire — when they defeat evil, they bring more light to their world.

For Mull, a novel release means a book tour. On Nov. 10, 2021, Mull visited students at Adams Elementary School in Logan.

The elementary school library was filled with laughter during Mull's presentation. Students giggled as Mull showed pictures of his goofy family and told embarrassing personal stories. He talked to the kids about his writing experience, showcasing his imaginative talents in a live writing workshop using volunteers from the crowd.

Together, Mull and three students created a new world with bumpy ground and poisonous flowers growing on trees. But Mull's reasoning for this imaginative create-your-own-world demonstration goes far beyond fun.

"Life can beat you down. Life can wear you out," Mull said. "Having a rich internal inner life is the best gift anyone can give to themselves." Mull's inner life is rich — and he owes it all to his imagination.

"I've always thanked myself when I've made room for letting my imagination be strong. For me, it very directly opened up the best opportunities in my life," Mull said. Imagination, Mull said, is equally as important as intelligence.

"I think imagination is the most important resource our country has," Mull said. "It's where innovation comes from."

But that imaginative innovation can often be stifled when children go to middle school. It's not cool to make up stories in your head and daydream during lunch. So, the flame of imagination flickers. For some, it burns out.

PHOTO BY Edward Harimoto

Brandon Mull talks about his fifth and final Dragonwatch book at Adams Elementary School on Nov. 10.

Mull is changing that one book at a time.

"I get 20 somethings and I get parents coming in saying, 'You're the reason my kid reads,' or like, 'You're the reason I read books. I read Fablehaven,'" Mull said, choking up.

Mull now lives in Utah with his wife, Erlyn, and 11 kids. He has been able to make his dream a reality, but his life has not been without struggle.

His first novel was never published. And in workshops throughout his life, Mull struggled to discern which criticisms he should take and which he should ignore.

"If I start trying to write for the people, I'll be writing with judgment that is not my own. I've got to write from that compass inside myself," Mull said. "I've got to write something that I think is good."

Mull is fully aware that aspiring writers around the world struggle with workshops just like he has.

"If you have a tough experience in workshops, it doesn't necessarily mean that you're not a good writer," Mull said. "Getting feedback on your books is vital, but not everybody who gives you feedback will be on your wavelength."

In his early years, Mull studied at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah with an emphasis in public relations — but his heart was always partial to writing.

"In the end, I really love writing," Mull said. "I think I'd be miserable if I didn't give this a real try. So, I just did." But Mull didn't start as a full time writer. He worked as a comedian, patio installer and copywriter, writing novels on the side.

With hard work — and a lot of imagination — his books grew in popularity. After the success of the first book in the Fablehaven series, the publishers wanted more, giving Mull more pressure than he was used to.

"You can get frozen by the expectations," Mull said.

According to Mull, that pressure can be a blessing and a curse; learning to write under that kind of pressure can be hard, but fulfilling. With his success on the rise and pressure for more stories, even more started to change in Mull's personal life.

Darkness crept into Mull's life during his divorce. According to Mull, his mind was broken.

"I was drowning in pain," Mull said. Writing came to a halt.

"I needed that escape into fantasy and into make believe," Mull said. "I couldn't generate it at the time and escaped into other people's fantasies." During these times of darkness, Mull found comfort in books like "Harry Potter" and "Percy Jackson." He found hope in fantasy and he encourages others to do the same.

Read, write, imagine and create — that's Brandon Mull's message.

"Be true to what you like," Mull said. "You'll be more likely to end up happy."

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POETRY, IDENTITY & (IN)JUSTICE

WITH RAVI SHANKAR

Nov. 15th, 2021 at 5pm-6:30pm
TSC East Ballroom

This event will discuss Shankar's memoir *Correctional*. Shankar's bold and complex self-portrait—and portrait of America—challenges us to rethink our complicity in the criminal justice system and mental health policies that perpetuate inequity and harm.

Shankar is an Pushcart Prize-winning poet, award-winning author, and editor of more than fifteen books and chapbooks of poetry and has been featured in the New York Times and on BBC, NPR, and on PBS NewsHour.

Volleyball star's journey from Ukraine to Logan

Kiev native is helping USU chase a conference championship

PHOTO BY **Paige Johnson**

Senior Kristy Frank competes in a game against New Mexico on Nov. 6.

By Mark Greenwood
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

Just a few months after a 5-10 record in the abbraviated spring season and in the first full season since a 2-28 finish, Utah State Women's Volleyball is having a breakout year and currently sits in second place in the Mountain West standings.

While many different players have contributed to this season's success, not many would rank above senior outside hitter Kristy Frank. With 212 kills, 189 digs and 34 blocks, Frank is one of the catalysts that make this team click.

Frank transferred to Utah State after playing two seasons with Wiley College, located in Marshall, Texas. Prior to Wiley, she grew up playing volleyball in about as unique of a hometown as you can find: Kiev, Ukraine.

Born and raised in Kiev, Frank started playing volleyball after a coach brought in a tryout flyer to a classroom she was sitting in. After that, there was no stopping her.

"You get addicted so fast to volleyball," Frank said about her tryout experience. "From there, it was just impossible to stop, and it just kept going."

Although public schools in Ukraine don't have volleyball teams, Frank was able to build her skills while playing on club teams and in a women's league. She was only able to play for a school team in eighth grade while she attended the Regional Kiev Boarding School.

After her time playing volleyball in boarding school, Frank attended and graduated high school from school #302 (public schools in Ukraine don't have names). After graduation, it was on to Harris County, Texas, to further develop her volleyball talent at the NAIA level.

Going straight from Ukraine to Texas, Frank immediately was thrown into the full American cultural experience. Describing the experience as a culture shock would be an understatement.

Frank grew up speaking Ukrainian throughout her childhood and knew very minimal English when she came to the states.

"It was very crazy…it was very different from what I'm used to in Ukraine," Frank said, laughing. "I didn't really speak in the first three months I was there because I didn't know what to say, and I didn't understand much."

Going from Ukraine wto Texas would undoubtedly be the most significant culture change she'd go through, but not the last. Before coming to Utah State, Frank attended Wiley College, categorized as a historically Black college or university.

HBCU universities were established prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Their past and the current goal is the education of Black Americans. Wiley College is both an HBCU and a religious college affiliated with The United Methodist Church.

Frank was quite successful with the Wildcats, becoming an NAIA Third Team All-American and winning Red River Conference Player of the year in 2019.

Her performance earned her an offer from the NCAA

Division-I Aggies. It was an opportunity she took.

"I just wanted to shoot for something bigger, go to a bigger school," Frank said.

As if Ukraine to Texas wasn't enough of a leap, Frank also made the jump from a United Methodist College to a school where, according to a USU diversity survey in 2019, 66% of its students are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Frank attributed the vast religious differences being the most prominent cultural change she experienced coming from Texas to Utah.

The Frank family still resides in Ukraine. With a flight to Ukraine being a minimum of 12 hours and the price not being any more forgiving, Frank doesn't get to see them as much as she'd like to.

She typically spends summers in Kiev, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, traveling home has been much more complex over the last 18 months. Frank has only been home to see her family three times during the previous three years. And her parents have few opportunities to come out to see her play.

Frank is over halfway through her senior season, and although she doesn't have everything figured out, her volleyball dreams are still very much intact. "I'm planning to work for a year after graduation, and then if it's possible, go play beach volleyball more professionally," Frank said. "That would be the ideal plan, but you never know how it's going to be."

While it's a great goal to have going forward, she's still got one thing on her mind the rest of the way.

"Our goal is to win the conference tournament," Frank says. "Our goal is to keep playing, keep winning and just play as long as we can."

The rest of the season will not be easy for the Aggies, as they play most of the top teams in the Mountain West, including hosting top-ranked Colorado State in mid-November.

A gauntlet of games remains, but Frank has nothing but confidence in her team in this expectation exceeding year.

@md_greenwood

PHOTO BY **Paige Johnson**

Frank jumps up to spike a ball on Nov. 6 against New Mexico.

Opinion: Bitcoin is increasing economic equality

Historically, governments and banks have total control over minting currencies, transferring money and creating economic policies. But a novel technology is disrupting these monopolies and creating a more equitable financial system for all.

Bitcoin was launched in 2009. It was the world's first cryptocurrency and is somewhat similar to the dollar or Euro. Unlike traditional currencies, however, the Bitcoin network is decentralized and not beholden to any central bank or government. It is run by millions of different computers across the world. As a result, Bitcoin can't be manipulated and is censorship resistant. Transactions are nearly instant, involve no intermediaries and incur minimal fees.

Bitcoin has changed dramatically since 2009, but today it is having a profound positive impact on underserved and disadvantaged populations.

International money transfers are a prime example. Each year migrant workers and immigrants send billions of dollars back to their families in their country of origin.

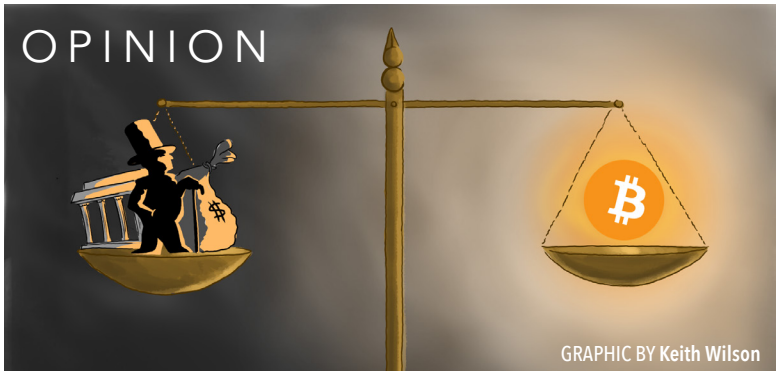
Historically, these people have been forced to use monopolistic companies like Western Union and MoneyGram that charge absurd fees. Additionally, transfers take days to complete and must be picked up at a bank, which leaves recipients vulnerable to violence and robbery in unstable countries.

Bitcoin fixes this problem. Anyone with an internet connection can send money across borders for a fraction of the cost and from the comfort of their own homes.

El Salvador took note of the powerful technology behind Bitcoin and adopted Bitcoin as legal tender in June of this year. Since then, more than three million El Salvadorans, or nearly half of the total population, have set up a Bitcoin wallet. In contrast, less than a third of the population have bank accounts.

With no documentation required, Bitcoin is helping connect people who would normally be excluded from financial systems. Many Bitcoin exchanges don't require identifying information, allowing stateless individuals to invest, save and increase their socioeconomic mobility.

Bitcoin is having a large impact in the United States as well. Year to date, the U.S. stock market has risen by around 20%. Over the same period Bitcoin has more than doubled, growing by nearly 130%.



Critics say Bitcoin experiences large price swings and is impractical for everyday transactions. Largely, I agree with them. There's no point in paying for your coffee with Bitcoin when you could use dollars instead.

For the average person, Bitcoin is best used as a long-term investment. It has a fixed supply of 21 million, meaning no more Bitcoin will be produced by the year 2140. As such, a recent Bank of America report described Bitcoin as "digital gold," and noted it can be used as a hedge against inflation.

In recent months, inflation has risen sharply following the coronavirus pandemic, large government spending packages and supply chain disruptions. As a result, individual investors and large institutions alike are turning to Bitcoin.

Bitcoin is especially promising for low- and middle-income individuals. During inflationary periods, the rich tend to get richer as the value of stocks and real estate go up. But people with fixed wages and few assets end up receiving the same paycheck while prices continue to rise.

Bitcoin offers an alternative. Rather than leaving cash in bank accounts or under the mattress where its value will only decrease, investing in Bitcoin can lead to greater long-term financial security. And as explained before, Bitcoin is accessible to everyone.

Tanner and Hannah Howell are both Utah State Aggies. Tanner is a senior studying biochemistry, and Hannah is a recent graduate. They described the impact cryptocurrencies have had on their financial security.

"I feel like as students and you know, especially as a recently married couple, we don't have to worry about the basics anymore," Hannah said. "You don't have to worry about like 'Oh, can I buy this item at the grocery store, you know, or am I going to have to spend it one rent?' We don't have to worry about the day-to-day things quite as much, and crypto has been a huge part of giving us that security."

Read the rest of this story at ususstatesman.com.

Eddy Pfeiffer is a third-year psychology major. In his free time he loves to hike, camp, and lose money trading cryptocurrencies.

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Letter to the Editor: Free speech is under attack

To the editor:

A recent guest column was published about why Critical Race Theory, or CRT, should be banned at Utah State University. I would like to offer a refutation to this column and instead advocate for freedom of expression at USU.

First, allow me to define CRT and explore its presence at USU. CRT theorizes that disparate racial outcomes are the result of complex and subtle social and institutional dynamics, rather than intentional prejudice. USU has hosted speakers who have discussed CRT previously, and it likely will in the future. USU employee-mandated courses cover Diversity, Inclusion, and Implicit Bias, but these classes are focused on individual behavior and are not dedicated to covering institutional prejudice. My goal today is not to declare my opinion on CRT nor defend the merits of CRT as an ideology, but rather to defend our constitutional right to talk about it, particularly at USU.

A university is fundamentally a marketplace of ideas, a public forum where good ideas succeed and bad ideas fail. Exposure to new ideas that challenge our preconceived perspectives starts debates and dialogue on the worthiness of an ideology. This is how truth-seeking has functioned best in the fields of science, politics, and philosophy. The guest columnist appears at first glance to support these ideals and fears that the capacity to truth seek at USU is threatened by Critical Race Theory. They even note their own fear of censorship within their column. In their words, cancel culture "has made people fearful of being bullied, shamed, fired from their jobs, even driven from society just for speaking their mind." Critical Race Theory, however, is simply an ideology. It is not censorship. It is not a form of cancel culture. The only ideology that can "cancel" or censor other ideas is censorship itself. The columnist ironically contradicts this whole part of their column by later concluding that USU should ban CRT on campus.

I firmly believe free speech of all kinds belongs at Utah State University. In this spirit of free speech, I would never force you to agree with my opinion, but I can't help but notice that a ban on Critical Race Theory sounds an awful lot like cancel culture to me.

Christian Stewart
USU student

**Letters can be hand-delivered or mailed to the USU Student Media office in TSC 118. They can also be emailed to opinion@ususstatesman.com. For more information, visit ususstatesman.com/letters-to-the-editor*

CARTOON BY **Keith Wilson**

@UtahStatesman

Last week's solution:

9	1	6	4	5	8	2	7	3
2	3	8	1	7	9	5	4	6
7	5	4	2	6	3	1	9	8
3	4	1	7	8	5	9	6	2
6	8	7	9	1	2	4	3	5
5	2	9	3	4	6	8	1	7
4	6	3	8	2	1	7	5	9
1	9	2	5	3	7	6	8	4
8	7	5	6	9	4	3	2	1

Sudoku OF THE DAY

Sudoku puzzles are provided by www.sudokuoftheday.com.

5								4
	6	9				7	1	
			3		9		6	
3			7				4	
	5		1		8		7	
	9				2			5
	7		8		6			
	8	6				3	9	
1								6

Beads hang on a tree near the Bear River Massacre monument.

PHOTO BY **Bailey Rigby**